

Big Ten Basketball Media Days

Thursday, October 7, 2021

Indianapolis, Indiana, USA

Maryland Terrapins

Women's Head Coach

Brenda Frese



BRENDA FRESE: Thank you very much. Obviously a very exciting day for us to all be back in person. It's great to be able to see each and every one of you.

For us, we have a lot to look forward to in this upcoming season. Some polls have us pre-season ranked No. 4 in the country. I think what I'm probably most excited about is having the buy-in from our players. To have three seniors all choose to return, to come back with their extra year of eligibility, I feel fortunate to be able to have that. Again, to have another year with the experience factor for our younger players is a big push for us going into the season.

We return 93% of our scoring that led the nation in scoring last year at 91 points per game. Also the team that this was first in assist-to-turnover ratio last year.

With that many possessions, to be able to secure the ball like they were able to do, was a big piece to our success last season.

We return all five starters. We had six players averaging double figures, all of them return. We'll be led obviously by Ashley Owusu and Diamond Miller who was named co-MVP in the Big Ten tournament. Also coming off of gold medals in the AmeriCup in Puerto Rico this past summer.

Katie Benzan, a grad senior, comes back, who led the nation in three-point field goal percentage at 50%. Chloe Bibby, her experience factor, her toughness, to be able to have Angel Reese, Mimi Collins, Channise Lewis, when you talk about another coming off of an injury to return back to the court. So many weapons for us that we're really looking forward to.

Our pre-season, our non-conference schedule, will prepare us. We play three of the top five teams in the country this season. So all games that are going to prepare us for what will be the most difficult Big Ten season ahead.

To have four teams in the Sweet 16 is huge. That experience factor is going to play a huge part of who is

hoisting that trophy come March.

Q. Last year at this time we were talking about so many newcomers, new starters, that kind of thing. Now you're bringing everybody back. What are the conversations you're having with the players now about these heightened expectations?

BRENDA FRESE: First and foremost at Maryland we always welcome them. We want that bar set as high as possible. The standard has always been set. We're disappointed any time we lose a game.

For us, we embrace it. I mean, our motto this season is: complete the mission. For us, it's going as far as we can, each and every game getting better, building upon each game we get to play in. The schedule was created on purpose that way to prepare us for March.

Q. You have coached at the collegiate level for a long time. To have the men and women here today, how significant do you think that is? How have you seen this change over the years?

BRENDA FRESE: It's huge. We're in 2021 so to finally see the needle being moved when these young women, just as I grew up had the same dream, now to be able to see them fulfilled, to be able to see today's venue, what the Big Ten has put together, has been extremely special for both your men's and women's teams coming in today.

For the amount of time these student-athletes put in, to finally see the exposure, to see the incredibility, to see the equalness for both genders, it's a huge moment in our time.

Q. You elevated the program when you were at Ball State. Now you're at Maryland. I would call this program elite. How difficult is it for you to maintain an elite program?

BRENDA FRESE: Yeah, very difficult. The climb to the top sometimes I think can be easy, but sustaining it, the consistency is the hardest. I think that's probably one of the things I take the most pleasure in is that we have been



able to sustain that elite level and consistency year in, year out.

The grind never stops. It's recruiting. It's being able to put your players in positions to be successful. It's having a great staff, which I'm very fortunate to have surrounded around me with great, hard-working young people that want to put Maryland on their chest.

Just proud obviously of what we've built and wanting to sustain it.

Q. What are your thoughts on the Final Four coming to Minneapolis?

BRENDA FRESE: I love it. I grew up in Iowa, so very close for my family and friends, as well. Minnesota has a special place in my heart as well, giving me the opportunity to be able to coach there for a season. I can't think of a better place for the Final Four.

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